

# THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE MAGAZINE PAGE

The Saving Dogs—Trained to Pick Out the Wounded from Among the Dead on Battlefields. These Animals Form an Important Part of the Field Hospital Service in the French and German Armies.



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## The Real "Dogs of War"

The Elaborate Use of "The Best Friend of Man" on the Bloody Battlefields of Europe

TO "let loose the dogs of war" has emerged from the figurative into the literal. As a feature of the actual fighting dogs are playing a definite and unique part in the great struggle which has convulsed the whole of Europe. It is not at all unlikely that future dispatches from the war front in Belgium will mention achievements of King Albert's light artillery made possible through the employment of dogs instead of horses.

In the armies of almost every European country dogs are trained either as spies, messengers, or to render aid to the wounded. Germany, France, Russia, Austria and Italy have their bands of trained dogs, and Prussia has employed them for twelve years. Sheep dogs, spaniels and short-haired German pointers are used, two dogs being appointed to each company, each dog having its own trainer.

First the dogs are taught to carry dispatches, deliver cartridges to the firing line, and then to search for the wounded or fallen soldiers. As soon as one of these is discovered the dog sets up a loud barking and the ambulance corps is attracted to the spot by the noise. If no help comes, the wise dog takes the man's cap or tears off a bit of his clothing and takes it to the field hospital.

Another clever trick of theirs is to give an alarm at the approach of an enemy. They are trained for this by one of their own soldiers being dressed up in the clothes of a foreign soldier for the purpose. In the early part of their education they are taken out with an old dog who thoroughly understands the work.

Another important part of the work of a war dog is bringing up ammunition during a fight. When the battle has commenced, the handler, as the soldiers who train the dogs are called, takes up a stand near the ammunition wagon with the dog. As soon as he sees ammunition is wanted, he loads the animal with 150 cartridges, carried in a double saddle-bag, half of the cartridges on either side.

Thus loaded, the intelligent beast does his best to reach the line of sharpshooters, and, if successful, returns immediately to the handler for more ammunition, and so continues the work until the battle is over, or, as would be certain to happen sometimes, he himself is killed. It has been proved that if he is wounded while carrying out his duties, he can seldom be induced to again venture near the place where he has been shot or cut.

However, the faithfulness of the dogs as a rule is wonderful, and, when loaded with ammunition, they will never allow the cartridges to be taken from them by soldiers or another battalion, and sometimes only by those of their own company, so well are the dogs taught to know the division to which they belong.

When the battle is over their duty is to search for the wounded and bring the news of their whereabouts to the hospital corps.

The aversion which the dogs feel for certain uniforms is inculcated into them by some German soldiers putting on French or Russian uniforms. They then tease or maltreat the dog, while the other men caress and pet him. In this manner the dog very soon learns to distinguish between friend and foe.

So intense is that hatred in some of the dogs for men habited in any uniform other than that of the regiment to which they belong that they will attack a postman. In order, however, that they shall not do any injury when on the march, the dogs are held by the soldiers in a leash.

The Russian dogs are chiefly trained to assist the medical corps in their work, and to help in the humane task of bringing aid as rapidly as possible to the wounded soldier. Big, strong dogs are selected for this purpose. St. Bernards for preference,

as being the most intelligent when left to their own devices, and also the most faithful.

The use of dogs as actual combatants will have had its origin in the present European war. If the Kaiser had respected the neutrality of Belgium and confined his armies to other routes into France, the spectacle of dogs bringing light machine guns into action would have been absent—for this, as well as nearly every other development of canine usefulness, is a device of the Belgians and Dutch.

Nowhere else in the world are dogs made useful in so many different ways. Throughout Belgium and the Netherlands these fine, docile, intelligent and powerful creatures are seen in all the streets and roads and about the farms and dairies, drawing laden carts and performing other tasks which in other countries are allotted to horses. One of these animals, when harnessed to a cart, exerts the strength of two ordinary men. A pair of them is nearly equal for this purpose to a single horse.

Standing no more than half as high as the average horse, these dogs are less than half as liable to in-

jury from the bullets of the enemy as artillery horses are. It was therefore quite natural that Queen Wilhelmina should encourage their adoption for a branch of the artillery in her army, and that Belgium, her next door neighbor, should be quick to profit by the example. Moreover, in both those countries dogs are numerous and cheap, while horses are scarce and dear.

The method of utilizing dogs for artillery service is indicated in the photographs reproduced on this page. They were taken during recent army manoeuvres in Holland, in which the dog artillery more than justified its existence. The photographs show them manoeuvring machine guns up and down and along a sandy hillside, where horses would be practically useless.

It is found that the use of these dogs adds an entirely new element to artillery evolutions, adding many fold to the destructive possibilities of the lighter order of rapid-fire guns. By the use of a specially designed gun-carriage the piece is quickly removed therefrom and set up for

action from a ridge or the crest above a trench, the dogs and the carriage meanwhile being out of the enemy's range.

The dog, for dog artillery use, is mounted on a frame of bicycle tubing, to which pneumatic-tired bicycle wheels are affixed. The frame includes mechanism for anchoring to the ground quickly when the piece is to be fired from its carriage, and, of course, carries ammunition as well as gun.

As in the case of other light artillery, there is a gun crew of an officer and four men. One of the crew leads the near dog of the team—as he would ride the near horse, if horses instead of dogs were used. The others are ready to put their hands to the light carriage wheels and help the dogs up a steep hill or steady the outfit where the going is rough.



Each Machine Gun on Its Light Carriage of Bicycle Tubing Is Drawn by a Team of Two Dogs, Guided by One of the Gun Crew.



The Light Artillery Dogs Resting With the Gun Carriages Out of the Enemy's range, While the Dismounted Guns Are in Action at the Crest of a Ridge.

The Dutch manoeuvres demonstrated that dog-drawn machine guns were quickly available in crossing sandy and hummocky stretches of ground impracticable for horses. Also, by employing the ruse of men and dogs falling frequently to the ground, it was possible to bring the guns into close action before the enemy could have opportunity of becoming aware of their existence. While the guns are in action—whether on their carriages or dismounted—the dogs are seldom in danger from the enemy's fire. At the word of command they lie down instantly, either while still harnessed to the gun carriage or when unhitched to find concealment of a more perfect character in hollows or behind hummocks.

stretch of country, with bellies close to the ground, they can bring up the guns to a new position, quite uninjured—where horses and men would have been shot to pieces.

Thus far the battles on Belgian French army, as was noted in the columns of this newspaper several months ago. The latter take no part in the fighting, being part of the field hospital equipment and trained to search out the still living from among the dead on the battlefield.

Several other of the European armies have followed the example of France and are using dogs for this humane purpose. Each animal wears a blanket marked with a large red cross, which proclaims him a noncombatant. A small sack hangs from his neck containing

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## No Excuse for Hot Boxes

SERIOUS delays and accidents to trains are often due to overheated bearings or, as they are known in railroad parlance, "hot boxes."

A "hot box" is the result of rank carelessness on the part of employees in not keeping a good vigil for the condition of the car wheels, or rather the care of the journals of the trucks under the car where the "hot box" is found. A "hot box" is a sign that the Safety First rule is not practised by some car-department men.

There is no excuse for a "hot box" after a car is sent out if the train is carefully looked over at each terminal. Primarily, a "hot box" is caused by poor waste and an insufficient "greasing" at the time it should have been done, and there is no excuse for one. A "hot box" is liable to cause a wreck, and a wreck on most railroads costs money, much more

than the price of sufficient quantity of waste and oil and grease to protect the journals of the car wheels. The farmer who buys a new buggy has a pretty good idea of what a "hot box" means, and the ways to prevent it. He sees to it that the spindle is well greased so it will not get hot. He watches it closely, and does not take any chances on the wheels running hot. If they did the wheels would stick, and if the farmer persisted in driving ahead, he would soon have a bad spindle and a bad wheel.

However, the results would not be so disastrous as they would be in a train of cars running at a speed of fifteen or twenty miles an hour. It's no wonder that trainmen use language unbecomingly for a Sunday-school class, when they find a "hot box" in their train. They know that some one has been careless and shirking in his work, and that he is to blame,

ground have been fought mainly with heavy field artillery, the object being to silence the guns of the fortresses. When actions occur with the French and Belgians occupying exposed positions it is quite probable that their "dogs of war" will be heard from as giving good accounts of themselves.

This use of dogs in warfare is not to be confused with their employment in the sanitary corps of the